THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (d) In the recent Budget speech Government has announced constitution of an Expert Group to advise on a viable and sustainable system of pricing of petroleum products.

The Government' had constituted a High Power Committee to Review the Financial Position of Oil Companies in June, 2008. The Committee submitted its report in July, 2008.

Government is modulating the retail prices of the sensitive petroleum products *i.e.* Petrol, Diesel, PDS Kerosene and Domestic LPG to protect the consumers from high international oil prices.

Government is closely monitoring the international oil price situation and will take appropriate pricing decisions to protect the interest of the common man, particularly the vulnerable sections of society.

India-Iran gas pipeline

2530.SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of India-Iran gas pipeline;

(b) whether Pakistan has agreed to reduce transit fee for gas from Iran to India;

(c) if so, the details of the transit fee proposed by Pakistan and the reaction of Government thereon;

(d) the details of the commitment given by Pakistan regarding safety of the India-Iran gas pipeline; and

(e) by when this gas pipeline agreement is likely to be finalized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (d) India is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline Project. Various important issues, *viz.*, pricing of gas, delivery point of gas, project structure, security of supplies, payment of transportation tariff and transit fees for passage of natural gas through Pakistan, etc., are under discussion amongst the participating countries.

(e) Such multilateral projects involve protracted discussions, as all the aspects have to be carefully examined and deliberated upon to the satisfaction of the participating countries to protect each country's interests and to avoid any problems in the future in the successful operation of the Project. Finalization of the agreement can be achieved when satisfactory resolution of the issues under discussion is reached by the countries participating in the project, *viz.*, Iran, Pakistan and India. As such, no definite time frame can be indicated for finalization of the agreement.